

Early Intervention

Early intervention begins soon after your baby has been diagnosed with hearing loss. Intervention will be provided by Infant Toddler Services in or near your community. Early intervention for children with hearing loss can help to build a successful future, and ensure that their full potential will be reached. A rich and full life awaits these children, especially when given full access to language right from birth.

In the state of Kansas, **ALL** children identified with hearing loss regardless of the type or the amount of loss **are automatically eligible to receive early intervention** services through their local Infant Toddler/*tiny-k* programs at no cost to the family.

Early intervention can help you understand hearing loss and gain confidence as a parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child. It also will guide you in identifying your child's strengths and needs and help your child develop important language skills necessary to become part of the larger community.



There are two main goals of early intervention:

Goal # 1 is to help the baby who is deaf or hard of hearing learn to communicate, to use any available hearing and to interact socially. All children learn skills best at certain ages. During these “sensitive periods,” your baby’s brain is ready to learn. If these opportunities for learning are missed, it will be more difficult to learn the skills later on.

Goal # 2 is to help your baby become a fully participating member of the family. Everyone in the family is important to your baby’s development, especially in developing language and social skills. For example, you’ll want your baby to know what your family talks about at mealtime and what big brother and sister did at school.

Early intervention begins with a visit from an infant/family specialist. She or he is part of a team of professionals, including an audiologist, speech and language therapist, teacher of the deaf, primary care physician, school district representative, an advocate of your choice or other professionals that will meet your child's needs. The most important part of the team is YOU.

Infant/family specialists know ways to help your baby develop some skills at the same age that hearing children do. She or he may help your child listen with hearing aids or a cochlear implant.

The infant/family specialist also will show you how to give your baby chances to look at your face for gestures and signs so your baby can understand the language you use to communicate about everyday life. Your infant/family specialist will help you feel confident when you play with your baby and respond to things your baby finds interesting.

Your specialist is a trained professional who has knowledge about hearing loss and its effect on a child's communication development. The primary goal of your specialist is to help you communicate with your child and encourage his or her development.

Your specialist will work closely with you to identify your needs and set priorities for your baby, help you locate resources, and answer your questions.

You and your specialist will schedule regular visits to take place in your home or another natural environment.

Get More Information

Kansas Department of Health & Environment
Infant-Toddler Services

785-296-6135

800-332-6262

www.ksits.org